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MEMORANDUM

To: School Food Authorities operating the National School Lunch Program
From: Robert M. Leshin, Director
Date: October 4, 2023
Subject: Northeast Food for School Grant Awards and Support (Revised)

This is a revised version of the "Northeast Food for School Grant Awards and Support issued on October 3, 2023". A corrected version of districts awarded, and values of award has been included.

Last school year, districts opted into the Northeast Food for Schools (NFS) funding opportunity available through the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), Office for Food and Nutrition Programs (FNP). DESE FNP is administering NFS in partnership with Massachusetts Farm to School (MFTS). This opportunity seeks to increase the capacity for School Food Authorities (SFAs) to procure local unprocessed or minimally processed foods for service in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP). In addition to expanding the capacity for procuring/providing local foods to schools, the program seeks to strengthen local food systems and ensure all children across the Commonwealth have access to high quality local foods at school.

A total of \$3,564,026 NFS funds have been awarded to SFAs to purchase from producers, including but not limited to farmers, food hubs, and fishermen, with all products originating within 400-miles. Concerted efforts will be made to highlight the opportunities made available through non-traditional providers of locally grown products like food hubs to create new procurement relationships with socially disadvantaged farmers and small businesses. It is essential that any vendor the SFA enters a contract with can guarantee traceability of product to ensure program funds are spent within the funding parameters.

Awarded districts may begin spending funds in **August 2023 through June 2024 for NSLP and SBP purchases**. Districts will be able to request reimbursement for allowable product expenses monthly through an on-line form (not the DESE security portal). This form will request basic information for reimbursement: the amount to be reimbursed, products purchased, and the farm/food hub/producer/supplier of the products. Periodic assessments will be performed to ensure that NFS funds are expended during school year 2023-2024. If a district is unable to expend funds they may be swept and reallocated.

FNP has partnered with MFTS to administer NFS and have [developed a website to collect resources and learning opportunities](#) for NFS participants and any SFA interested in purchasing

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locally grow products. MFTS will be the primary contact for most questions about how to find local suppliers, eligible items and will collect data and requests for reimbursement from SFAs. They will then review and validate requests for reimbursements which will then be shared with FNP to allow for claim submission and payments to districts in the form of a monthly payment. **FNP will only accept request for reimbursement through the MFTS data collection tool. On August 17, 2023, MFTS provided the food service director and business manager with the login information and instructions specific to your district.** Be sure to save NFS@Massfarmtoschool.org to your safe senders list so important communications are received.

Please refer to the attached table for funding awards, alphabetized by district name. Additionally, please refer to the frequently asked questions for more specific explanations of eligible products, funding requirements and procurement processes. If you have questions about your district award or reimbursement, please contact [Maggie Nowak](#).

If you are interested in discussing your plan for spending NFS funds or to request procurement assistance, please [contact MFTS](#).

Agreement Number	District Name	REVISED Total Award
09-002-1	Acton Boxborough Reg'l School Dist	\$ 31,446
03-003	Acushnet Public Schools	\$ 5,959
07-005	Agawam Public Schools	\$ 21,506
08-008	Amherst School Committee	\$ 8,559
08-008-1	Amherst/Pelham Regional School District	\$ 5,485
05-009	Andover Public Schools	\$ 36,851
09-010	Arlington Public Schools	\$ 25,000
14-328-1	Ashburnham-Westminster	\$ 10,000
09-014	Ashland Public Schools	\$ 19,317
09-170-1	Assabet Valley Regional Vocational S. D.	\$ 9,937
14-015-1	Athol-Royalston Regional School District	\$ 10,000
03-016	Attleboro Public Schools	\$ 25,000
14-017	Auburn Public Schools	\$ 21,281
11-018	Avon Public Schools	\$ 4,783
09-019-1	AYER-SHIRLEY REGIONAL DISTRICT	\$ 10,207
01-020	Barnstable Public Schools	\$ 33,910
08-024	Belchertown School Committee	\$ 16,705
09-026	Belmont Public Schools	\$ 24,036
03-027	Berkley Schools	\$ 7,121
14-028-1	Berlin-Boylston Reg'l School District	\$ 5,795
05-030	Beverly Public Schools	\$ 26,860
09-031	Billerica Public Schools	\$ 30,552
14-032-1	Blackstone-Millville Regional School	\$ 12,913
11-050-1	Blue Hills Regional School District	\$ 6,595

Agreement Number	District Name	REVISED Total Award
13-035-CS-34	Boston Preparatory Charter School	\$ 5,547
13-035	Boston School Committee	\$ 100,000
11-040	Braintree Public Schools	\$ 31,043
01-041	Brewster Elementary School	\$ 3,430
12-042-1	Bridgewater-Raynham Regional	\$ 34,896
07-043	Brimfield Elementary	\$ 2,030
03-076-3	Bristol County Agricultural	\$ 3,437
03-293-1	Bristol-Plymouth Regional School Dist.	\$ 9,092
13-035-CS-46	Bridge Boston Charter School	\$ 15,258
14-045	Brookfield School Committee	\$ 2,923
11-046	Brookline Public Schools	\$ 33,117
09-048	Burlington Public Schools	\$ 17,041
11-050	Canton Public Schools	\$ 18,607
01-126-2	Cape Cod Reg'l Tech High School	\$ 4,961
09-056	Chelmsford School Committee	\$ 31,545
07-061	Chicopee Public Schools	\$ 68,450
07-281-I66R	Children's Study Home	\$ 1,000
13-035-CS-438	Codman Academy Charter School	\$ 2,307
11-065	Cohasset Public Schools	\$ 7,947
05-009-4	Collab. for Reg. Ed. Serv.& Training	\$ 3,831
09-049-CS-5	Community Charter School	\$ 1,000
09-067	Concord Public Schools	\$ 7,041
09-067-1	Concord-Carlisle Regional District	\$ 5,024
06-068	Conway School Committee	\$ 1,405
03-072	Dartmouth School Committee	\$ 20,576
11-073	Dedham Public Schools	\$ 22,008
06-074	Deerfield School Committee	\$ 3,113
13-035-S14	Department of Youth Services	\$ 3,432
03-247-1	Dighton-Rehoboth Regional School Dist.	\$ 10,000
14-077	Douglas School Department	\$ 7,323
11-078	Dover Public Schools	\$ 2,416
11-078-1	Dover-Sherborn Regional School District	\$ 5,221
14-054-1	Dudley-Charlton School District	\$ 21,637
12-082	Duxbury Public Schools	\$ 12,084
12-083	East Bridgewater School Committee	\$ 10,000
07-087	East Longmeadow Public Schools	\$ 10,000
03-088	Easton Public Schools	\$ 16,865
04-089	Edgartown School Committee	\$ 3,119
06-091	Erving Public Schools	\$ 1,363
09-093	Everett Public Schools	\$ 63,260

Agreement Number	District Name	REVISED Total Award
03-094	Fairhaven Public Schools	\$ 10,000
03-095-I53R	Fall River Deaconess Home	\$ 1,000
03-095	Fall River Public Schools	\$ 100,000
14-097	Fitchburg School Department	\$ 43,032
11-099	Foxborough Public Schools	\$ 10,000
06-192-2	Franklin County Technical School	\$ 5,721
11-101	Franklin School Committee	\$ 10,000
06-074-1	Frontier Regional School District	\$ 2,494
14-103	Gardner School Committee	\$ 19,351
08-143-1	Gateway Regional School District	\$ 5,923
05-105	Georgetown School Department	\$ 7,533
06-192-1	Gill-Montague Regional School District	\$ 8,040
05-107	Gloucester School Committee	\$ 16,314
14-110	Grafton Public Schools	\$ 15,892
05-009-1	Greater Lawrence Regional Voc School	\$ 14,864
06-114	Greenfield Public Schools	\$ 16,215
09-115-1	Groton-Dunstable Regional Sch District	\$ 8,447
08-117	Hadley School Department	\$ 3,970
05-119-1	Hamilton-Wenham Regional Sch District	\$ 7,264
07-339-1	Hampden-Wilbraham Regional Sch District	\$ 18,810
12-122	Hanover School Department	\$ 15,885
14-125	Harvard Public Schools	\$ 5,289
08-127	Hatfield School Committee	\$ 1,789
05-128	Haverhill Public Schools	\$ 44,221
06-053-1	Hawlemont Regional School District	\$ 1,077
12-131	Hingham Public Schools	\$ 16,865
07-135	Holland School Committee	\$ 2,359
09-136	Holliston Public Schools	\$ 10,000
07-137-CS-2	Holyoke Community Charter School	\$ 7,510
07-137	Holyoke Public Schools	\$ 60,447
09-139	Hopkinton Public Schools	\$ 19,596
09-141	Hudson Public Schools	\$ 10,000
09-301-CS-22	INNOVATION ACADEMY CHARTER SCH	\$ 4,819
05-144	Ipswich School Committee	\$ 7,465
05-149-P4145	LAWRENCE CATHOLIC ACADEMY INC	\$ 4,851
05-149	Lawrence Public Schools	\$ 75,000
09-100-I94R	Learning Center for Deaf Children	\$ 1,290
14-348-4	Learning First Charter	\$ 7,033
02-150	Lee Public Schools	\$ 4,845

Agreement Number	District Name	REVISED Total Award
14-151	Leicester Public Schools	\$ 10,823
02-152	Lenox School Committee	\$ 5,102
14-153	Leominster Public Schools	\$ 10,000
06-154	Leverett Public Schools	\$ 1,000
09-155	Lexington School Committee	\$ 36,776
09-157	Lincoln Public Schools	\$ 3,746
09-288-1	Lincoln-Sudbury Regional School District	\$ 5,847
09-158	Littleton Public Schools	\$ 10,000
07-159	Longmeadow Public Schools	\$ 10,000
09-160	Lowell Public Schools	\$ 50,000
07-161	Ludlow Public Schools	\$ 14,610
05-163	Lynn Public Schools	\$ 25,000
05-164	Lynnfield Public Schools	\$ 12,197
09-165	Malden Public Schools	\$ 49,949
05-168-4	Marblehead Community Charter School	\$ 1,711
05-168	Marblehead School Department	\$ 11,646
09-170	Marlborough School Department	\$ 41,023
05-298-1	Masconomet Regional School District	\$ 6,724
09-174	Maynard Public Schools	\$ 7,813
14-151-I67R	McAuley Nazareth Home for Boys	\$ 1,000
11-175	Medfield Public Schools	\$ 15,353
09-176	Medford Public Schools	\$ 27,534
14-179-1	Mendon-Upton Regional School District	\$ 10,000
13-035-P100	Mesivta of Greater Boston	\$ 2,812
05-181	Methuen Public Schools	\$ 10,000
12-182	Middleborough Public Schools	\$ 19,171
14-186	Millbury School Department	\$ 11,068
11-187	Millis Public Schools	\$ 7,469
11-189	Milton School Committee	\$ 27,845
06-268-1A	Mohawk Trail Regional School District	\$ 5,689
07-191	Monson Public Schools	\$ 6,262
14-097-1	Montachusett Regional Voc Tech	\$ 9,324
10-197	Nantucket School Committee	\$ 7,117
14-294-1	Narragansett Regional School District	\$ 9,806
14-034-1	Nashoba Regional School District	\$ 10,000
09-326-1	Nashoba Valley Tech High School	\$ 5,508
09-198	Natick Public Schools	\$ 10,000
01-224-1	Nauset Regional School Committee	\$ 8,120
11-199	Needham Public Schools	\$ 33,130

Agreement Number	District Name	REVISED Total Award
03-201	New Bedford Public Schools	\$ 100,000
05-204	Newburyport Public Schools	\$ 10,303
09-207	Newton Public Schools	\$ 40,278
11-307-3	Norfolk County Agricultural	\$ 2,731
11-208	Norfolk Public Schools	\$ 2,731
02-209	North Adams School Committee	\$ 13,171
05-211	North Andover Public Schools	\$ 29,616
03-212	North Attleboro Public Schools	\$ 25,000
14-215	North Brookfield	\$ 3,022
09-299-1	North Middlesex Reg'l School Dist	\$ 10,000
09-217	North Reading School Committee	\$ 11,630
08-210A	Northampton - Smith Vocational	\$ 4,765
08-210	Northampton Public Schools	\$ 13,136
14-213	Northborough School Committee	\$ 8,476
14-214	Northbridge Public Schools	\$ 10,000
03-218	Norton Public Schools	\$ 10,000
11-220	Norwood Public Schools	\$ 10,000
12-250-2	Old Colony Regional Voc Tech	\$ 4,171
12-173-1	Old Rochester Regional School District	\$ 14,583
14-287-CS-66	Old Sturbridge Academy Charter School	\$ 2,444
06-223	Orange School Committee	\$ 6,281
01-224	Orleans School Committee	\$ 1,341
07-227	Palmer Public Schools	\$ 7,939
08-230	Pelham School Committee	\$ 1,000
12-231	Pembroke School Department	\$ 10,000
14-234	Petersham School Committee	\$ 1,250
06-216-1	Pioneer Valley Regional School District	\$ 6,087
02-236	Pittsfield Public Schools	\$ 25,000
11-238	Plainville School Committee	\$ 5,072
12-239	Plymouth School Committee	\$ 25,000
14-021-1	Quabbin Regional School District	\$ 13,733
14-311-1	Quaboag Regional School District	\$ 10,000
11-243	Quincy Public Schools	\$ 25,000
06-223-1	Ralph C Mahar Regional School District	\$ 2,812
11-244	Randolph Public Schools	\$ 10,000
09-246	Reading Public Schools	\$ 17,571
13-248	Revere Public Schools	\$ 67,887
12-251	Rockland School Committee	\$ 17,032
05-252	Rockport School Committee	\$ 4,455

Agreement Number	District Name	REVISED Total Award
06-253	Rowe School Committee	\$ 1,000
05-258	Salem School Department	\$ 32,036
01-261	Sandwich School Committee	\$ 11,617
05-262	Saugus School Committee	\$ 10,000
09-010-P371	Schools for Children	\$ 1,000
12-264	Scituate Public Schools	\$ 16,609
05-164-P500	Seem Collaborative	\$ 2,466
11-189-P286	Shaloh School Oholei Torah	\$ 4,148
11-266	Sharon Public Schools	\$ 19,725
09-269	Sherborn Public Schools	\$ 1,668
14-271	Shrewsbury Public Schools	\$ 35,750
06-272	Shutesbury Public Schools	\$ 1,000
09-274	Somerville Public Schools	\$ 50,000
03-292-P215	South Coast Educational Collaborative	\$ 1,692
09-100-2	South Middlesex Regional Voc Tech	\$ 7,375
14-276	Southborough School Committee	\$ 5,047
14-277	Southbridge Public Schools	\$ 17,398
02-267-1	Southern Berkshire Regional School Dist.	\$ 4,797
07-279-1	Southwick-Tolland Reg'l Schl Dist	\$ 10,494
14-280-1	Spencer-East Brookfield Regional	\$ 10,575
07-281	Springfield Public Schools	\$ 100,000
02-070-P8	St Agnes School	\$ 1,000
02-150-P10	St Mary School	\$ 1,000
13-035-P448	St Theresa School	\$ 1,278
09-284	Stoneham Public Schools	\$ 11,049
11-285	Stoughton Public Schools	\$ 24,468
14-287	Sturbridge School Department	\$ 7,320
09-288	Sudbury Public Schools	\$ 12,555
06-289	Sunderland School Committee	\$ 1,562
14-290	Sutton Public Schools	\$ 8,468
03-292	Swansea Public Schools	\$ 14,121
09-295	Tewksbury School Committee	\$ 24,510
01-085	TOWN OF EASTHAM	\$ 1,455
11-101-2	Tri-County Regional Vocational Tech	\$ 5,991
05-254-1	Triton Regional School District	\$ 10,000
01-300	Truro School Committee	\$ 1,000
09-301	Tyngsborough School Department	\$ 8,130
04-296-1	Up-Island Regional School	\$ 2,701
14-304	Uxbridge Public Schools	\$ 12,193

Agreement Number	District Name	REVISED Total Award
09-305	Wakefield Public Schools	\$ 19,825
07-306	Wales School Committee	\$ 1,000
11-199-I22R	Walker Home and School	\$ 1,069
11-307	Walpole Public Schools	\$ 24,377
09-308	Waltham Public Schools	\$ 45,640
09-314	Watertown Public Schools	\$ 19,179
09-315	Wayland Public Schools	\$ 10,000
09-100-I11R	Wayside Youth and Family Support	\$ 1,790
14-316	Webster School Committee	\$ 16,830
11-317	Wellesley Public Schools	\$ 14,556
01-318	Wellfleet School Committee	\$ 1,000
12-323	West Bridgewater School Committee	\$ 10,000
09-330	Weston Public Schools	\$ 9,247
03-331	Westport Community School District	\$ 9,815
06-337	Whately School Committee	\$ 1,320
09-342	Wilmington Public Schools	\$ 21,792
14-343	Winchendon Public Schools	\$ 10,000
09-344	Winchester Public Schools	\$ 17,654
13-346	Winthrop School Committee	\$ 9,518
09-347	Woburn Public Schools	\$ 25,000
08-349	Worthington Public Schools	\$ 1,000
11-350	Wrentham Public Schools	\$ 6,142
07-159-P240	Yeshiva Achei Tmimim	\$ 1,000

Northeast Food for Schools Questions and Answers

Requesting Reimbursement

1. How do I request reimbursement for NFS purchases?

Please refer to the instructions and manual provided on August 17, 2023, by Massachusetts Farm to School. The communication contained login information, manual, and step-by-step instructions.

Eligible Products and Producers

2. What is the definition of “local and regional food” for NFS?

Local and regional food is raised, produced, aggregated, stored, processed, and distributed in the locality or region where the final product is marketed to consumers, so that the total distance that the product travels between the farm or ranch where the product originates and the point of sale to the end consumer is at most 400 miles, or both the final market and the origin of the product are within the same State or territory. Food must also meet the requirements of the definition of “domestic food”.

3. Can you clarify what foods are considered “unprocessed or minimally processed”?

Examples of allowable food products include fruits and vegetables (including 100% juices); grain products such as pastas and rice (if all ingredients originate within 400 miles); meats (whole, pieces, or food items such as ground meats); meat alternates such as beans or legumes, and fluid milk and other dairy foods such as cheese and yogurt. Foods in a wide variety of minimal processing states (e.g., whole, cut, pureed, etc.) and/or forms (e.g., fresh, frozen, canned, dried, etc.) are also allowable.

Foods that are generally understood to be significantly processed or prepared are unallowable. Examples of unallowable products would include baked goods such as breads, muffins, or crackers; prepackaged sandwiches or meals; other prepared and/or pre-cooked items that come ready-to-eat or that require no further preparation beyond heating (eg. chicken nuggets, fish sticks, pre-made pizzas, etc).

4. Purchases must target socially disadvantaged farmers and producers and small businesses. Can you expand more on what is meant by socially disadvantaged producers? Are purchases limited to those producers or is this just a target?

For the purpose of this program, “socially disadvantaged” is a farmer or rancher who is a member of a Socially Disadvantaged Group. A Socially Disadvantaged Group is a group whose members have been subject to discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and, where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or a part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. While purchasing from socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers and small businesses is not a requirement, it is a target. Proposals should include the steps the applicant will take to target these populations.

5. Does the headquarters of a producer or supplier have to be in the same state or

within 400 miles of the delivery destination to be considered a “local or regional” supplier?

Yes. To be considered "local or regional," the producer or supplier headquarters must be in the same state or within 400 miles of the delivery destination.

6. How do we determine if a company is a small business or not? Is there a certification process?

A small business is generally defined by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) as a business that is: a for profit-businesses of any legal structure; independently owned and operated, not nationally dominant in its field, and physically located and operated in the U.S. or its territories. There is no required certification or validation process. There are multiple resources to assist with identifying small businesses. Applicants may wish to consult the Small Business Administration website at www.sba.gov for more information or consult with FNP or MFTS.

Financial Considerations

7. How were funds awarded to SFAs?

SFA’s in good standing with FNP who submitted an interest survey by March 20, 2023, were awarded through a formula that ensured equitable distribution to individual school districts as is required in 7 CFR 250.58(b). This formula was based on the total number of breakfasts and lunches claimed in October of 2022 and then adjusted based on SFA’s funding requests and the minimum/maximum award values of \$1,000/\$100,000, respectively.

8. Does all food purchased need to be served as part of school meals?

Yes. Food purchased through the cooperative agreement program must be distributed to schools that participate in the NSLP / SBP.

9. Are there any special requirements for funding awarded to a district who is operated by a Food Service Management Company (FSMC)?

No, NFS funds support SFAs to increase their capacity to procure local unprocessed or minimally processed foods for service in school meals and snacks. SFAs reimburse FSMCs for all allowable expenses incurred in the operation of the SFS. The FSMC and SFA need to track the food purchases so they can demonstrate that they spent the amount they received in those funds on minimally processed products grown within 400 miles. SFAs do not need to make special payments to FSMCs, just need to be able to identify purchases of those foods that equal the amount received.

Procurement

10. We utilize a broad-line distributor in the state contract, for most of our food purchases, could the funds be used for local farmers who sell to this distributor?

Yes, if that distributor can provide traceability of the items that you purchase using these funds. They would need to be able to tell you the location and name of the farm where the food that was delivered was grown.

11. As an FSMC, if we have vetted a local vendor through our corporate office do, we have to do three bids and or an RFP to spend awarded funds?

All purchases made for CNPs must follow federal and state procurement practices. If you have existing vendors previously procured within these regulations, you do not need to complete a new/different procurement process to spend these funds.

12. Where can additional resources for questions on local procurement be found?

- [Navigating Procurement Challenges in Farm to School](#) (Recorded presentation)
*Please note, this recording was made prior to the Commonwealth increasing the small purchase threshold from \$50,000 to \$100,000.
- [Procuring Local Foods in Child Nutrition Programs](#) (Guidebook)
- Sample Small Purchase RFQ (State resource)
- [List of MA Farmers and Food Hubs interested in selling to schools](#)

Please see the Sample Small Purchase RFQ, found in the DESE security portal's Document and Reference Library under "NSLP - Farm to School" for additional guidance.

13. What are the required steps when making a Micro-Purchase (\$10,000 or less)?

- Contact a vendor
- Determine a reasonable price and retain documentation
- Distribute micro-purchase equitably among qualified suppliers

14. What steps are required when making a Small Purchase (\$10,001 - \$100,000)?

- Draft specifications, terms and conditions in writing
- Request three or more quotes from qualified suppliers
- Evaluate quotes
- Make purchase and retain documentation
- Execute and monitor contract

Please see the Sample Small Purchase RFQ, found in the DESE security portal's Document and Reference Library under "NSLP - Farm to School" for additional guidance.

15. What technical assistance will be made available to awardees to help them effectively spend their award?

- [Identify suppliers of local foods](#)
- Support compliant Massachusetts Chapter 30B procurement process. Specifically, a Sample Small Purchase RFQ developed to aid in the expenditure of these funds is available. Found in DESE security portal's Document and reference library under "NSLP - Farm to School"
- Highlight the value of local food in school meals.
- [Mass. Farm to School will be hosting a series of webinars to support program participants.](#)